

Bay-Delta Conservation Plan Accomplishments

A group of water agencies, fishery agencies, and environmental organizations, including the California Natural Resources Agency and the Department of Water Resources (DWR), are developing the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) to promote the recovery of endangered, threatened and sensitive fish and wildlife species and their habitats in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in a way that will also protect and restore water supplies.

The BDCP is:

- Identifying conservation strategies to improve the overall ecological health of the Delta
- Identifying ecologically friendly ways to move freshwater through and/or around the Delta
- Addressing toxic pollutants, invasive species, and impairments to water quality
- Establishing a framework and funding to implement the Plan over time

The BDCP is a comprehensive conservation plan under the federal Endangered Species Act and the California Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act. The plan will be implemented over the next 50 years. The heart of the BDCP is a long-term conservation strategy that sets forth the actions needed for a healthy delta. Below are just a few of the many currently planned conservation strategies:

- Restore up to 65,000 acres of freshwater and brackish tidal habitat within restoration opportunity areas.
- Restore 5,000 acres of riparian forest and scrub in restoration opportunity areas.
- Enhance channel banks along 20 to 40 linear miles with more natural riverbank features, such as overhanging shade, instream woody debris, and shallow benches.
- Preserve and enhance approximately 45,000 acres of terrestrial habitat
- Provide freshwater outflow necessary to maintain a desirable salinity regime and for fish health and survival.
- Maintain water quality standards set forth by the State Water Resources Control Board and other standards for quality throughout the Delta.
- Control non-native aquatic plants that support predator habitat.
- Construct non-physical barriers to redirect outmigrating juvenile salmonids (e.g., bubbles, light, and sound barriers)

DWR and other state and federal agencies are developing a joint Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS) under the Delta Habitat Conservation and Conveyance Program (DHCCP). The EIR/EIS will determine the potential environmental impacts of the proposed potential habitat restoration and water supply conveyance options included in the BDCP.

The EIR/EIS will:

- Fulfill the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act
- Analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action and the alternatives

The Draft EIR/EIS is expected to be ready for public review and comment in 2010/2011.

<http://baydeltaconservationplan.com>

